

**Soldiers** *Online*

It's what's inside a soldier that counts.







# What's Up With "An Army Of One"?

Story by Heike Hasenauer

**SINCE its launch in January, the new "Army of One" recruiting campaign has proven to be a hit with its intended audience — young people between 18 and 24.**

The series of TV and print ads has sparked a 167-percent increase in visits to the U.S. Army Recruiting Command website, and daily calls to the Army's toll-free recruiting number are up by 42 percent, said COL Kevin T. Kelley, USAREC's director of advertising and public affairs at Fort Knox, Ky.

Though a winner with potential

recruits, the campaign hasn't been quite as popular with older audiences, Kelley acknowledged. Those who don't like it mostly say the words "An Army of One" conflict with the Army-as-a-team philosophy that's made America's Army great, he said.

But some Army officials and marketing representatives suggest the naysayers may have judged the new campaign too quickly, considering the slogan alone and comparing it to the long-running "Be All You Can Be" slogan. In so doing, they've overlooked everything else connected with the new campaign, he said.

The first television ad featured CPL Richard P. Lovett, from Fort Bragg, N.C., running through the desert at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., his dogtags jingling and shining under a blazing sun. Over his labored breathing a voiceover says: "Even though there are 1,045,690 soldiers just like me, I am my own force. With technology, with training, with support, who I am has become better than who I was. And I'll be the first to tell you, the might of the U.S. Army doesn't lie in numbers. It lies in me."

What many failed to consider early on was that the new ad campaign doesn't stand on its slogan alone, or on an image of any one soldier. As the words "with technology, with training,

with support" suggest, there are requirements to becoming "An Army of One," Kelley said.

While it's true that "An Army of One" carries with it no snappy jingle or overtly emphasized words, it does contain a sub-slogan: "Find One of 212 Ways To Be A Soldier at GOARMY.COM or call 1-800-USA-ARMY." Virtually every ad directs listeners, viewers and readers to the redesigned website that packs a more powerful punch than any slogan alone can, Recruiting Command officials said.

Anyone who takes time to log onto the website can learn virtually anything they want to know about a career in the Army, simply by selecting the numerous options available at the top of the homepage, said Kelley.

Click on "Soldier Profiles," for example, to learn more about Lovett and several other soldiers, including information about their jobs and their motivations for enlisting. Or click on "Basic Training," and pictures of Michelle Boatner and other recent recruits appear. Boatner's profile includes background information, her reason for enlisting and her concerns about basic training.

Click on a "Basic Training Week" button to get the scoop on each of the feared nine weeks of training. Detailed information about each of the Army's



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212 MOSs can be accessed via the next button, and so on down the line.

The menu options also allow potential recruits, or anyone with an interest in the Army, to "chat" with a recruiter, request printed information in the mail, locate a local recruiter and learn specifics about the active Army, National Guard, Reserve and ROTC.

The Army awarded Leo Burnett, the Chicago-based ad agency, a four-year, multimillion dollar recruiting advertising contract for a number of reasons, said Army marketing representative Barry Lipsy. One was the firm's impressive track record for increasing the sales of such clients as Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Kelloggs, Pillsbury and Walt Disney. The more significant reason was the active Army's failure to meet recruiting quotas three out of the last five years, most notably in 1999, when the deficit was 6,300 soldiers short of a 74,500 goal.

Leo Burnett's chief executive officer, Linda Wolf, said her staff traveled across the Army, visiting various installations and talking to hundreds of soldiers, among them new recruits, to understand what the Army's all about so they could realistically convey it to the target audience.

The new campaign also targets the Hispanic community — heretofore under-represented in the Army — through individual Spanish-language advertisements, said Lipsy.

Leo Burnett also agreed to an incentive-based contract versus a requirement-based contract. This means the agency will get bonuses if the Army meets its recruiting goal, said Lipsy. A requirement-based contract merely ensures that a company does the job it is hired to do — and nothing more.

"The people we interviewed before going with this slogan understood the

duality of its message — individual strength, plus teamwork," Kelley said.

While the ads are working well with most 18- to 24-year-olds, at least one would prefer something else. When shown a video of the first TV ad, potential recruit Timothy Mirandi of Baltimore said: "I didn't really understand the slogan. It didn't have a real impact."

Many young people, he felt, would rather see dog-fighting F-16s or lava monsters as in one of the Marines' TV recruiting ads.

LTC Norvel Dillard, commander of the Baltimore Recruiting Battalion headquartered at Fort Meade, was at the battalion's Potomac Mills, Va., Recruiting Station — a one-of-a-kind station where everything's touch-screen-based — when the Army launched its new campaign.

"Most of the people at my 58 recruiting stations waited anxiously for the announcement," Dillard said, "because none of us knew what the new slogan was going to be. When I saw the soldier running across the desert in that first ad, and he says, 'Who I am has become better than who I was,' it hit home for me. The focus is still: 'You can come into the greatest Army in the world and improve yourself.'"

"To me, the new slogan talks about

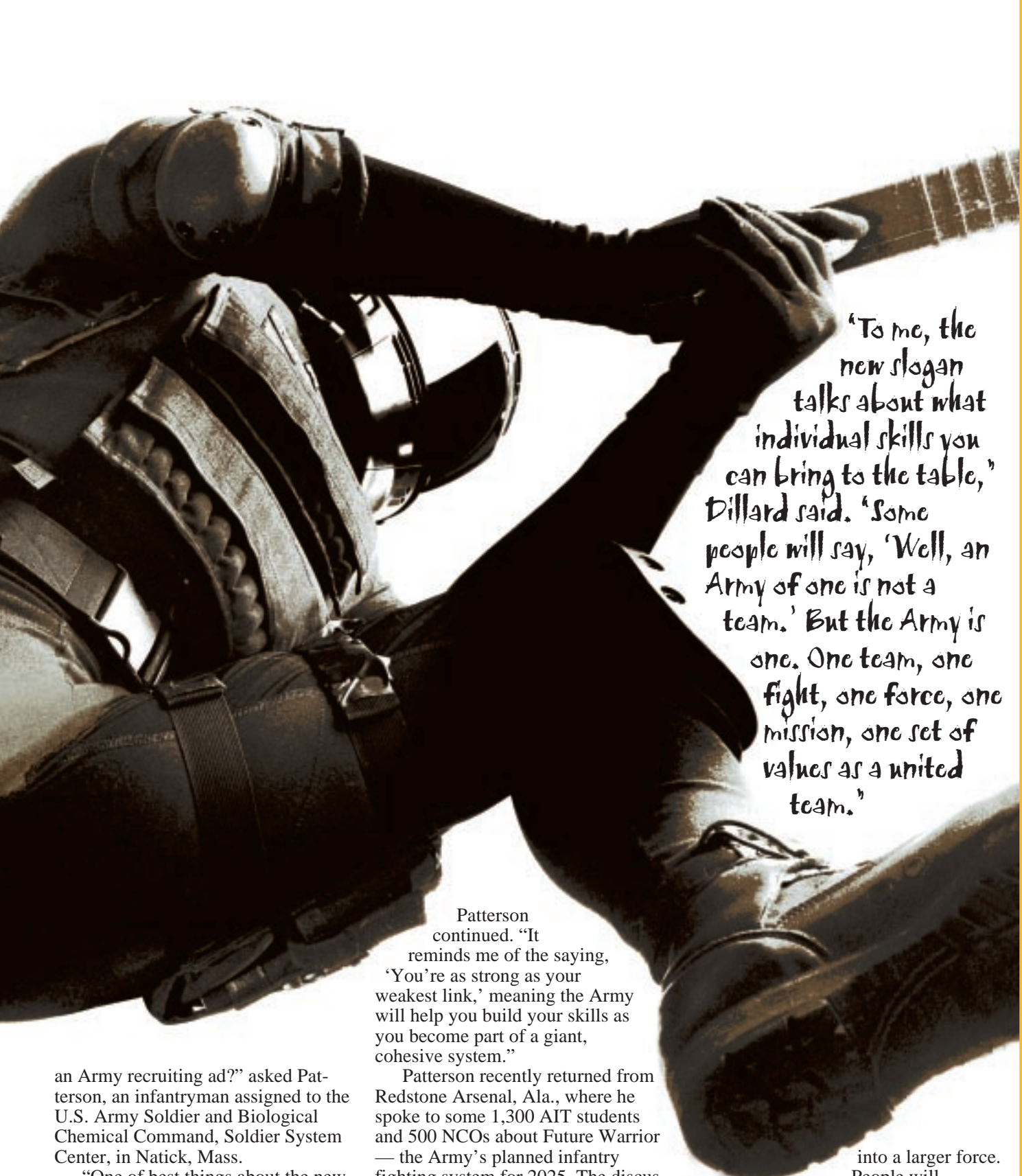
what individual skills you can bring to the table," Dillard said. "Some people will say, 'Well, an Army of one is not a team.' But the Army *is* one. One team, one fight, one force, one mis-

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sion, one set of values as a united team."

If passionate discussion about the new slogan is any indication of its potential success, "An Army of One" has hit the ground running, said SGT Joseph E. Patterson, who appears in a form-fitting, black "Spiderman"-like Future-Warrior suit in some of the Army's new print ads.

"When did anyone ever talk about



*"To me, the new slogan talks about what individual skills you can bring to the table," Dillard said. "Some people will say, 'Well, an Army of one is not a team.' But the Army is one. One team, one fight, one force, one mission, one set of values as a united team."*

Patterson continued. "It reminds me of the saying, 'You're as strong as your weakest link,' meaning the Army will help you build your skills as you become part of a giant, cohesive system."

Patterson recently returned from Redstone Arsenal, Ala., where he spoke to some 1,300 AIT students and 500 NCOs about Future Warrior — the Army's planned infantry fighting system for 2025. The discussion there also turned to the new slogan, he said.

"Some like it. Some don't," he said. "But they all said it accomplishes the Army's mission," to emphasize the fact that you can retain your individuality in the Army and still meld well

an Army recruiting ad?" asked Patterson, an infantryman assigned to the U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command, Soldier System Center, in Natick, Mass.

"One of best things about the new ad is that it's putting 'Army' back in peoples' vocabularies," he said. "As they think about what 'An Army of One' means, they discuss it with friends, colleagues, even people on the street."

"I think the slogan's good,"

into a larger force. People will probably never forget the Army's "Be All You Can Be" slogan, which debuted in 1981, said Lipsy. The catchy music and exciting visuals that accompanied the slogan made "Be All You Can Be" the number two ad jingle in history, second only to the



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McDonald's slogan "You Deserve a Break Today," according to the trade magazine Advertising Age.

It's a tough act to follow. But Lipy and Leo Burnett are confident it will achieve equally respectable staying power, Lipy said.

"Our advertising campaign is geared toward enlightening our target audience, 18- to 24-year-olds, so they'll say, 'Gee, I didn't know the Army did that,'" Lipy said.

"A lot of kids still join the Army to get money for school or to gain a sense of direction," said SFC Darrick Hazley, a recruiter at the Towson Recruiting Station.

Army research indicates today's youths are "overwhelmingly aware" of college fund benefits. Conse-

quently, the new recruiting campaign doesn't attempt to entice potential recruits with money for college. Rather, "we are selling how the Army strengthens you as an individual," said former Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera.

"'An Army of One' sends the message of empowerment as it relates to the transformation young men and women go through to become soldiers and then leaders," added Wolf.

Though apparently effective in drawing the interest of its target audience, the new campaign's effectiveness as a recruiting tool remains to be seen, Kelley said. Army officials will gauge that, in part, by the effect the ads have on recruiting quotas.

"It's really too early to tell if the campaign has had a positive effect, although certain numbers indicate it has," he said.

The day the Army announced its new recruiting campaign, the GOARMY.COM website had 30,000 visitors, Kelley said. "That was a 200-percent increase. Many of those can be attributed to the initial media hype that drew attention to the site."

By early February, GOARMY.

COM still had an average of 15,000 hits per day, Kelley said. Additionally, phone calls to the Army's (800) USA-ARMY number were up 53 percent, from 1,300 to 2,000, from a comparable period in 2000.

Recruiting Command officials will continue to monitor the campaign's success by conducting quarterly assessments of weekly telephone-poll surveys from about 75 18- to 24-year-olds from across the

country, Kelley said.

By late spring or early summer, information about the Army, via the new campaign, will have reached tens of millions of people, Army officials said. Direct-mail notices in January and February alone were sent to seven million 18- to 24-year-olds, said Lipy.

Subsequent television, radio, print and Internet ads will feature some of the following soldiers:

SPC Natalie Ortiz, a medical laboratory specialist with the 32nd Medical Logistics Bn. at Fort Bragg; SPC Carlos Perez, a Reservist with the 6252nd U.S. Army Hospital in Ventura, Calif.; and SGT Leroy Durrah Jr., an information systems operator and analyst with Headquarters & HQs. Company, 501st Signal Bn., at Fort Campbell, Ky.

Other ads feature real-life basic trainees at Fort Jackson, where film crews followed recruits through an entire nine-week basic training rotation, said post spokesman Doug Cook.

Some 40 subcontractors brought a "rolling studio" to Columbia, S.C., "so they could





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the new “Extreme Football League” games, Cook said.

“The ads are a take-off on the ‘Survivor’ television series’ clips,” he said. “You get a video snapshot of someone for a split second, followed by another brief snapshot. It’s like giving the viewer a taste of something somewhat mysterious, but, at the same time, introducing him to someone who is accessible.”

Collectively, the ads provide glimpses of every aspect of basic training by showing the average person successfully learning soldier skills, Cook said. □

produce the commercials here, send them to Washington, D.C., for review and on to the people who put them on the air,” Cook said.

They filmed a multi-ethnic group of trainees for the ads that first aired in early February, some of them during

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